

Testimony in SUPPORT of SB284:
“An Act Increasing the Age from Eight to Eighteen Years for an Income-Eligible Person to Obtain Medical Assistance Regardless of Immigration Status”

Dear Members of the Human Services Committee of Connecticut General Assembly:

My name is Camille Brown, MD and I am work at a federally funded health clinic, Fair Haven Community Health Center in New Haven, CT. I am also part of Yale School of Medicine and Yale-New Haven Hospital.

I stand in support of SB284: AN ACT INCREASING THE AGE FROM EIGHT TO EIGHTEEN YEARS FOR AN INCOME-ELIGIBLE PERSON TO OBTAIN MEDICAL ASSISTANCE REGARDLESS OF IMMIGRATION STATUS. Expanding access to HUSKY up to age 18 regardless of immigration status is an important step in making sure our immigrant community has access to the healthcare we all need and deserve. But our work doesn't end with expanding access up to age 18; we need to open access to HUSKY and healthcare to all immigrants of any age, including parents and adults.

I have the privilege of working with many wonderful immigrant families at FHCHC. In addition, I direct the Pediatric Refugee Clinic at Yale. The families I see in refugee clinic have been granted refugee status and thus the children are covered by Husky. I can care for them with a high standard of care and know that I am giving them the care I was trained to give. However, when I see children from immigrant families who have similar medical needs but do not have insurance, I am struck by the inequality of the care I can give to them. Weekly, I make decisions on what lab work and referrals I can order and medicines I can prescribe for these children. It is heart breaking to be offering them incomplete care knowing that this may affect their development, learning potential, and future health and well-being.

I support S.B. 284 ,and I ask the committee to support and pass this legislation. Looking forward, I ask the committee to work towards opening access to all community members in CT regardless of age or status.

Thank you for your time,
Camille Brown, MD, FAAP
Assistant Clinical Professor, Yale School of Medicine
Director, Yale Pediatric Refugee Clinic